

Andrew Jackson to Francis Preston Blair, January 16, 1838, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO FRANCIS P. BLAIR.

Private.

Hermitage, January 16, 1838.

My dear sir, Your very interesting letter of the 20th ultimo, and conveying to me your kind greetings with the joys of the season, reached me on the 2d instant, and let me assure you that myself, with all my household, sincerely reciprocate your kind, and good wishes, to you and yours.

Since the receipt of your letter I have been severely indisposed—for two nights and days I never closed my eyes, part of which my head was much affected, with occasional delirium, during which, they failed to bleed me, until it subsided, when I caused it to be done, which relieved me. My ears, and head had swollen to an alarming degree—my head broke out all over in soars, which I have no doubt was favorable. I am now recovering slowly but still confined to my room. Should my friend, Chief justice Taney, be in the city, please present him with my kind regards; say to him I have received his kind letter and will reply to it as early as my health will permit.

I have read with attention your letter. I am happy to learn, that Mr. Rives has opened his eyes to his situation, and that he is determined to adhere to his republican principles and the republican party—his attitude assumed, with that of Mr. Richie, for a moment, had like to have done great injury to the republican party, and give courage to the opposition. The conservatives, must now see that the people view them, as one and indivisible with the

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fedarel Whiggs. the lines are now fully down, and they must identify themselves with the federalists or return to the republican fold; and when they return, it will take a long time to restore themselves again, to the confidence of the democracy of the country.

I am clearly for no compromise—a full and free divorce from all Banks by the Government. Suppose the system adopted of special deposits in banks in certain cases, where the officers refuse to give sufficient security—what security will the Banks give that they will not again suspend, and if they do, what security that they will not withhold from the Government this special deposit will Banks receive the deposits specially made, without *premium*, and give ample security for the safe keeping, and not using, but faithfully paying the special deposits to the Government as required, *I think not*. There is no danger but agents of the government can be had who will give security for the faithful discharge of the duty of receiving, keeping, and disbursing the public revenue. But the moment the condition is adopted, that Banks will be employed as special depositories for the public money in case the agents refuse to give adequate security, then you will see the power of the Banks in all the great cities wielded to deter agents from giving security, and the Banks, *secretely* wielding their influence and money, to prevent the agents from complying with the requisitions of the law, that the Banks may receive the deposits.

I am for closing all doors to this system of corruption, and at once establishing a system that will entirely separate the Government, *now and forever*, from all Banks, and the money power used by them. I have no opinion of entering into *hotch-potch* with Banks—their business is to make money, they contaminate and corrupt every thing and body that is connected with them.

You must recollect my ideas of Treasury notes. I knew the attempt would be made to depreciate them, and unless the government raises the interest upon them the Banks will effect their object, much to the gratification of the Federalists, and greatly to the injury of our national credit. The Banks committed the fraud upon the people and the Government by suspending specie payments and they ought to have been made, sensibly to have *felt*

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their treachery in suspending. It was not the people who were indebted to the banks, it was the overtraders, speculators and gamblers in stocks, houses and land. These have been relieved, but the labour of our country have felt, sensibly felt, the injury they have sustained by the depreciation of the Bank rags, and are still suffering under this evil, whilst the Banks, stockholders, speculators, and swindlers, are all benefitted by the suspension — *is this right* and it appears that the Legislatures every where, are under the influence of Banks, and are willing to permit labour to suffer for the crimes of the few. Therefore it is why congress should separate the Government from all Banks, by which the labour of the country would be freed from the iniquitous burden of a depreciated paper in all times hereafter justice demands this, and if congress fails to do it, the people, the sovereign people, will speak in a voice of thunder to their representatives. . . .

January 17, 1838.

P.S. I have just read in the Globe a letter, which states, that Mr. Whitney is part owner of, and associate Editor of the Madisonian, *is this true* , and that Mr Wise and him are quite reconciled and *intimate* is stated here. if this be true, it shews how little principle governs either. Wise abused both the Banks and Whitney as corrupt, and depicted Whitney as the basest of men. Now Wise approves the course of the Banks, professes that they are worthy of all confidence and that Whitney is an honest and correct man, *o tempora, o mores.*

What part of the conservative force is Mr. Garland, of virginia,¹ acting—is he gone over to the Federal ranks, or is he trying to cover his hypocrisy and to get back to the republican fold. recollect when he, in combination with Wise submitted his resolution and became the chairman of the committee, I told you he was a judas—his whole course was one, on that committee. that convinced me he was a hypocrite and working for the benefit of Wise, and the opposition, *the tree is known by its fruit.* ?How does the old Col, his father, relish the course of the son! How does *old* judge White get on—does he still continue *solus* , or is he getting into the good society of the Federalists again, or is he like the crab,

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running backward into the republican ranks. How long before the House will get that part of the Presidents message that relates to the finance referred to the committee. Has Govr. Pope² gone entirely over to the Federalists. Has all the republican members of Newyork rallied for the divorce bill, if not, how many have joined the Federalists, for understand

¹ James Garland, M. C. 1835–1841.

² John Pope, governor of Arkansas 1829–1835; M. C. from Kentucky 1837–1843.

me, I view all men who call themselves conservatives, Federalists of the most dangerous hue. I would, if a leisure moment occurs, like to have your views of all these things. No temporising—a firm steady course and the people will sustain the executive—the least temporising with conservatives will destroy the republican party, as sure as the Grecian horse destroyed Troy.